



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



PROFESSOR GEORGE PIERCE GARRISON

THE QUARTERLY

OF THE

TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

VOL. XIV

JANUARY, 1911

No. 3

The publication committee and the editors disclaim responsibility for views expressed by contributors to THE QUARTERLY

GEORGE PIERCE GARRISON

H. Y. BENEDICT

On July 3, 1910, at his home in Austin, George Pierce Garrison died of heart disease. For over a year his health had been gradually failing and he had been coming slowly to a realization of the fact that his labors were exceeding his powers of endurance. Planning to work less arduously as soon as he could dispose of the second volume of the "Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas," which he was then engaged in editing, he was overtaken by death with the proofs of the volume upon his desk. His immediate task was nearly done, but, dying at the age of fifty-six, it can hardly be said that his life work had rounded to a perfect close. Had he been spared, his character and his influence would have continued to benefit the University of Texas, and his learning and industry would have continued to illumine the history of our country. Unfortunately, in place of his active presence, the memory of him alone now serves to guide and inspire.

George Pierce Garrison was born December 19, 1853, at Carrollton, Georgia. His father, Patterson Gillespie Garrison, and his mother, Mary Ann Curtiss Garrison, were Georgians of Georgian descent. His early experiences differed in nowise from those of the average Georgia boy of the period. He retained a pretty vivid recollection of war time and the accompanying privations, along with a considerable knowledge of negro life and character.

His early schooling was obtained at Sewanee College, Win-

chester, Tennessee, and at the Carroll Masonic Institute, Carrollton, Georgia. Struggling to make a living and to acquire an education, he came to Texas in 1874, where he taught school in Rusk and adjoining counties for five years. In 1879 he went to Scotland, and took the degree of L. A. (Literate in Arts) from the University of Edinburgh in 1881. Returning to Texas, he married Miss Annie Perkins of Rusk county in November, 1881, and taught school at San Marcos until the spring of 1882, when failing health forced him to quit teaching. He moved to a ranch in Hays county and busied himself with outdoor labors. His health improving, he accepted in 1884 an instructorship in English literature and history in the young University of Texas. He was made an assistant professor in 1888; an adjunct professor in 1889; an associate professor in 1891, and professor of American history in 1897.

Tuberculosis, which attacked him in 1882, seriously threatened his life in 1889. Partly by medical treatment but mainly by sheer will power he overcame this disease so thoroughly that his later years were free from the shadow of it.

In 1896 he took the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Chicago, and in 1910 Baylor University conferred upon him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. The death of Judge Gould in 1904 made Professor Garrison in point of service the senior member of the faculty of the University of Texas.

Professor Garrison was one of the founders of the Texas State Historical Association and was editor of *THE QUARTERLY* from its beginning in 1897 until the time of his death. To his care *THE QUARTERLY* owes much of the reputation which it has acquired among historical publications in this country. He was a member of the American Economic Association, of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, of the American Historical Association, and of various local clubs and associations. He was for several years a member of the Executive Council and of the Historical Manuscripts Committee of the American Historical Association, and at the time of his death he was chairman of the new Library and Historical Commission of Texas.

For several years Professor Garrison was a member of the school board of Austin. He took an active interest in local affairs as well as in those of Texas and the United States. He

was for years a member of the Methodist Church, and had much to do with the building of the University Methodist Church in Austin. His relation to his family was almost ideal. His mother, his wife, two sisters, and four daughters survive him.

Such in brief is the bald outline of a life almost heroic. His writings, most of which are familiar to the readers of *THE QUARTERLY*, will be found listed below. They have been received with favor by competent critics, they have won for their author a respectable place among American historians, and they speak for themselves. Professor Jameson has said of him, "It is not too much to say that he exerted more influence than all preceding students had ever exerted," on the history of Texas. He availed himself of all the known historical records and sources, and nothing but the discovery of new material can seriously disturb the conclusions that he reached. Out of his class room have come a number of young Texas historians who are trained in the best methods of modern investigation and who are destined greatly to elucidate the history of Texas, of the South, and of the nation. Their work, and his, form his epitaph as an historian.

But the man was greater than his works. In him the scientific historian was ever subordinate to the patriotic citizen. He studied and taught history with unflagging zeal because he firmly believed that it revealed an unceasing moral purpose running through the ages, because he thought that the experience of the past could be profitably brought to bear on the problems of the future. He was an historian because he was a public-spirited man who firmly held that an insight into the experience of our race would greatly broaden and benefit each succeeding generation.

In this feeble effort to do justice to his memory, it is needless and impertinent to attempt to take his measure as an historian, and it is far better to lay stress upon what he was rather than upon what he did. It is well to do great things but better still to be great. Yet it is no easy task to describe him as he was. A modest, patient, prudent, brave, and kindly man he was, whose demerits were few and small and whose virtues were so thoroughly blended into a fine character as to give but little place for light and shade in picturing him. Only a friendship extending over many years justifies the poor attempt here made to convey some notion of the merits of the man to those who knew him not.

The most salient feature in his life was his power of continual growth. Throughout his life he increased in moral insight and intellectual power, and at his death he was a broader man in every way than he had ever been before. It is the sad fate of most men to stop advancing at relatively early years, but in his case the advance continued to the end at an increasing rate. His progress in youth was greatly retarded by adverse circumstances. He was twenty-six years of age before he entered the University of Edinburgh, and he had money enough only for two years of study there. Attacked by tuberculosis at the age of twenty-nine, for eight years he fought a life and death struggle, winning because he possessed an indomitable spirit. So it came to pass that, beset by disease and poverty, he reached his fortieth year before he found it possible to begin his historical studies in real earnest. These long years of struggle brought out the man that was in him, and, his disease conquered, the last fifteen years of his life were years of great progress and increasing usefulness.

Although a gentle and tolerant man, desirous of finding good in all men and little prone to severe judgments, he possessed all the rigor of an old Puritan and all the firmness of a granite rock when it came to compromising with evil. In cases involving morals he carefully decided upon the course to pursue or the judgment to adopt, and, his conclusion made, nothing save new facts could bend him from it. His desire to reach a correct conclusion sometimes delayed action, but the action, when it came, was always without fear or favor. He once said, half in jest and half in earnest, "I am moved neither by tears nor guns." He combined in a remarkable manner an absolutely inflexible morality with a just appreciation of the weakness of human nature. Slow to form an opinion, sure to look carefully at all the aspects of a situation, accustomed to balance probabilities, versed in the intricacies of human nature, Professor Garrison had many of the qualifications of a great historian.

As a teacher he was highly regarded by his students, and he had the great power of coming into sympathetic personal contact with a very large number of them. He held that the first duty of a state university was to produce intelligent and patriotic citizens, and he tried to teach history so as to make his students worthy members of a democracy, a democracy seeking justice and as mind-

ful of duties as of rights. He was clear in exposition, interested in students and their lives, ever animated by a noble purpose; therefore one is not surprised that both the negligent and the diligent thought well of him. He insisted that education must reach every human capacity, must fit for life, but not for life in a narrowly utilitarian sense.

It is obvious to those who have read his books that Professor Garrison possessed an excellent command of the English language. As a speaker he was effective, possessing a good voice and a pleasing presence. In making impromptu addresses he was often particularly happy as is evidenced by his admirable and partly unpremeditated reply (fortunately taken down at the time and printed in Volume IX of the *University of Texas Record*) to the felicitations showered upon him at the dinner given in his honor at the Driskill Hotel in 1909. His written style is careful and logical, abounds in passages of real literary merit, and is garnished here and there with quiet humor. He had a most extensive knowledge of the English Bible, an accomplishment all too rare in this generation, and could quote accurately many verses and several entire chapters. He was well read in English literature and was not unacquainted with the literature of antiquity. Through life he retained a fondness for good poetry, and in his youth he wrote a few verses himself. One of his lesser accomplishments was an ability to sing negro songs after the old plantation fashion, and by doing so he sometimes surprised people who knew him only in his professorial capacity.

Southern by birth and sympathy and warmly appreciative of all that was good in the civilization of the old South, Professor Garrison was always singularly dispassionate in his view of all questions relating to the Civil War. He did much to defend the South from accusations based on defective historical knowledge, but he regarded the war as a necessary step in the welding of the United States. He knew that the progress of civilization had altered and would continue to alter the relations originally existing between the states and the federal government. For the Constitution and the Judiciary he had an intelligent appreciation, but he did not regard either as incapable of improvement. While not unmindful of the benefits to be derived from a proper organization of governmental machinery, he maintained that the liberty and welfare of

a people depend more upon its own intelligence and virtue than upon paper constitutions or particular governmental forms. Long study of the governments of Great Britain and the United States finally led him to the conclusion that the American system of checks and balances was in many ways developed to such an extent as to interfere with good government and check the free development of democracy. He came to believe in placing a good deal of power in the hands of public officials and in then holding them to a strict and frequent accountability to the voters. He therefore viewed with favor the British cabinet system and the commission form of government in our American cities. He regarded the obviously waning prestige of the states as compared with the growth of federal power as an inevitable process brought about by the progress of mankind. He was, however, a firm believer in local responsibility and in local self-government in local affairs, and thought that the proper division of power between the various local governments and the general government was rather a question of business administration than a proper subject of violent partisan controversy. He followed with keen interest the growth all over the world of the power of our race to govern itself wisely and justly. In those controversies that will probably continue to agitate the world during the twentieth century, he took the part of those who regard the rights of man as superior to the rights of property. Though he was attached to Texas as few men are, his patriotism was not provincial. He was more an American than a Texan, and as an American he did not shut his eyes to the merits of other nations or to the evils that flourish amid the good in our national life.

By temperament and training, Professor Garrison was a man of deep religious instincts. Although he accepted many of the more radical results of biblical higher criticism and although he was thoroughly convinced of the substantial truth of the evolutionary conception of the universe, he found it possible in all sincerity to remain a faithful member of an evangelical church. This he did not only because he regarded the Christian church as the greatest means of individual and social regeneration but also because he believed that the essentials of Christianity are so profoundly true as not greatly to need the help of much detailed historical evidence. A reverent man, loving truth, he looked with clear

vision upon the universe and found there progress and a moral order. He knew that a diligent study of nature and man, coupled with an earnest effort to carry out the precepts of the Son of Man, would lead men near to the footstool of the Most High.

In attempting to describe the character and opinions of an educated man, one feels the inadequacy of words. Because example is better than precept, it has been the custom of biographers to depict rather by incidents and anecdotes than by labored exposition. In this account the temptation to relate certain interesting and illustrative events in the life of Professor Garrison has often arisen. But many such details are needed to give a just idea of a man, and it has been thought better here to seek emphasis by means of brevity.

In bringing this inadequate account of my friend to an end, the sadness produced by his untimely death and by my own sense of personal loss is deepened by my inability to make plain the worth of him to those who did not know him. Let us therefore measure him by his aspirations, which are to be found accurately expressed in these noble words that he loved to quote from Tennyson's "Ulysses."

"But something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods. . . .
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and, sitting well in order, smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are—
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

PROFESSOR GARRISON'S WRITINGS

BOOKS

The Civil Government of Texas. Philadelphia. Eldredge and Brother. 1898.

The History of Federal Control of Congressional Elections. St. Louis. The Christian Publishing Company. 1900.

Texas: A Contest of Civilizations. Boston. Houghton, Mifflin and Company. 1903.

Westward Extension (Volume XVII of *The American Nation*). New York. Harper and Brother. 1906.

Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas. 2 volumes. Volume I is *Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1907*, II; and volume II is *Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1908*, II (in press). Washington. Government Printing Office.

ARTICLES

"Another Texas Flag," *THE QUARTERLY* of the Texas State Historical Association, III, 170-176. "Guy Morrison Bryan," *Ibid.*, 121-136. "Richard Montgomery Swearingen," *Ibid.*, 225-231. "The Summer School Movement," *The University of Texas Record*, II, 269-274. "University Traditions," *Ibid.*, III, 112-118. "Address at the Installation of President Houston," *Ibid.*, VII, 42-45. "Historical Address at the Inaugural of President Mezes," *Ibid.*, VIII, 261-278. "Address at the James B. Clark Memorial," *Ibid.*, IX, 125-128. "The Lot of the Reformer," a faculty commencement address, University of Texas, June 16, 1891. "Utilitarian Education," *Public Opinion*, 588-589, September 19, 1891. "A Woman's Community in Texas," *The Charities Review*, III, 28-46 (1893). "Texas," Johnson's *Universal Cyclopedia* (1895). "Historians," *Popular Science Monthly*, November, 1900. Reprinted in *The Texan*, December 11, 1900. "The Archivo General de Mexico," *The Nation*, May 30, 1901. "Southwestern History in the Southwest," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1901*, I, 231-242. "Connecticut Pioneers Founded Anglo-American Texas," *The Connecticut Magazine*, IX, No. 3. "The First Stage of the Movement for the Annexation of Texas," *The American Historical Review*, X, 72-96. "A Memorandum of

Moses Austin's Journey" (1796-1797), a document edited with annotations, *The American Historical Review*, V, 518-542. "The University of Texas and its New President," *Review of Reviews*, 682-685, December, 1905. "The Truancy of the Texas Navy," *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, forthcoming.